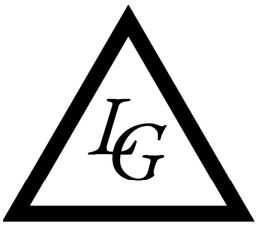
THE THIRD GOOFIÍST ENCYCLICAL.

Edited by Sainted Nigga Sherm.

CONTAINING

1. *Poems by Sn. Sherm.*
2. *The Canonical Adventures of Jack and Charlie, consisting of three narratives, By T.VT. et al.*
3. *Fragments of an Illiterate, by Ls. Hrodebert.*



I.C.G.A.

PRODUCED

ANNO —— M. M. XX. II.

TO THE READER.

READER;

AND here it is, the very third one. A very blessed numerical determinación. Given this numinous instance,—it has been determined that certain special measures must be taken in the medium of the advancement of general Jesṭáism. For we have captured the eye, and now we seek to do the same with the ear; the nose will come in due time. Thus, this Encyclical will include a special audio-textual performance, ushering in potent consecración for this most triangular edition of our interlibric works. The rest, of course, will follow the usual scheme, viz.—further illuminación, jesṭáción, and so on.(a.)

Your Humble Servant,
the smallest skull
in God's throne,
the I.C.G.A.

(a.) *The special audio-textual performance has, since the publication of this text, passed away. Not even his favorite cousin showed up at the funeral party.*

POEMS

BY

Sn. Sherm.

Do What it do.

THe fashion party's over nigga,
Open your eyes, what you think this is?
Is it something you seen before?
I doubt it,—goddamn do I doubt.
Beat yó ass wiṭ a stick,—coathangá;
Saddam 'em... Saddam an' Hussein 'em.
Ye, that's how it is, that's how it will be.
You think these words is mad?... Immá kīll yoū.

Causación.

DAt summah rain do come,
Lye da ending of de erf.
Soon it be sunniń,
The soonah it be thunderiń;
Ye-suh—it are as be.

Visage.

DAjjalesque visage,
Wiṭ purpuh cup in hand.
Da chalice leeps...
Like Moroccan blood
of Chriſtian sons! OOOOoo!

King Nigger.

HEre he comes, King Nigger, the Lord of the maze.
The maze that shifts at his command.
Here comes, that devil,
That eternal dark spot in the eye.
The left or right? I do not know.
There goes King Nigger, there he go!
Him sceptá in hand, Him bejeweled crest!
From beginningless time to endless rest!
King! King! Twofold corpus!
Unravel the labyrinth for me,—make it go away.
In the names of Muhammad, by command of Amen,
Please! Please! Do not make me live again!

Troubliń.

Í Am á man óf complex emośón,
I am deep like dí ośón.
Deï say Í may be mád,
Dó nót hate mé,
I have powá ín my hand.
We do are not touching,
Like watṭá and sand.
Deï take you to á dark place,
Dark place.
Yé deï take you to a dark place,
Yé—yé—yé!
Mkono wangu na kuzimu.

Darkiń.

Who out theá in da lightness zoomiń?
Who out theá in da daürkness gloomiń?
Who out theá,—I sæ!
What that is, that darkiń on my wæ?
What kiń darkiń,—I cannot sæ.
O shapes ó lightniń,—deï do come!
Wiṫ da daürkness, do battle be done.
'Top right theá,—an' tell me the truth...
They's cousins, blooded by birth?

THE CANONICAL ADVENTURES OF JACK AND CHARLIE, BY The Very Thing et al.

Jack & Charlie Visit Aleppo. *Chap. 1.*

During the night, Jack and Charlie were fishing for eels in the North Sea, braving that most disturbed chasm between the Scandinavia and their native land of the British Isles. The weather was beginning to worsen, and a light rain started to usher in a potential storm. Nonetheless, the two remained in their boat, determined to not be deterred by the spasms of atmospheric turmoil.

"Let's go to Aleppo, Charlie," Jack said.

"What is Aleppo, Jack?" Charlie asked.

"The place where the great sea god Neptune wants to be baptized with water from the pure fresh spring." Replied Jack.

"Remember Nourain, that 23 year old Prince or King who gave me perfume back in the day? Well, he's been

caught up in a war, and I figure we should take a look at what all the fuss has been about."

As they spoke, they were submerged in water up to their necks. Although the waves were moderate in size, ſtill they tossed the raft to and fro in a violent manner, with such force as a mighty sea-serpent. They swam their way from the North Sea to the continent of Europe. The numerous tides, and the imperceptible depth of the water, impaired their navigation,—and they often separated from each other as they ſtruggled forward in their wretched craft, while the water closed over their heads, as though a gigantic whale had breached the surface. At length, however, they came to a rocky beach, and reached a thick mass of vegetation. In order to get above it they had to climb with their hands and feet.

With that, they made their way to Aleppo, with its multitudes of thieves, scavengers, swindlers, shewers, muggers, and gangbangers, for Aleppo was now full of them.

They descended to the Hell of Avariſtan, the Land of the Conqueror, and the land of the Fellai who dwelt in the ruins of ruins. They passed Babylon, and passed over the great and horrible ſtream of Karatau, that was blocked by a cairn of ſtones at its source, then they ascended the great Mountain of the Seven Fathers, the Bitter Peace. Here they did indeed encounter the Chaldeans, who had already sacked Babylon and came down to Aleppo with an army, and they had been armed by the Britons in the Time of the Copper Hand.

They proceeded to Nineveh, where the great horses of the Assyrian invaders of Persia were being drenched in holy water by the laſt survivors of the Babylonian

army, who were retreating by sea from Persia. They then passed through the lands of the Massagetae, and the nomad Fergana, whose soldiers did not assail them, for the old conquerors were dead, and the Fergana were now ruled by a disinherited prince of the Muscovite dynasty of Caliphs, who had united the three great powers of Persia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia.

They wandered, and wandered, and passed the city of Uruk, whose ranks did battle with the Sassanid Persians and the Iranian Tartars, and been crushed by them in a single day at the Battle of Chalagan.

Finally, they reached Aleppo. The city was decimated, but still, somehow, reflected its opulence. In a suburb, they entered a church. The services were led by an old Syriac bishop named Symeon.

Jack sat down in the middle of the room and put on a huge straw hat with a leather trim. Charlie sat next to him, and was dressed like a sheikh. The churchgoers were a bit stunned, it was a strange thing to hear the low-pitched voice of a Cockney, accented with the resonant tones of an Indian, or an American negro, speaking the history of Britain from the 12th to the 16th centuries, in the slang of the people of the East End of London.

"And so the Turks come to Europe," Jack said, "dressed in their turbans and camels, with their shearing shears and their little ploughs, and all our horses and cattle fell to their feet before them, and fell, and fell..."

"It sounds like something Dickens might have imagined." said Charlie, conversationally.

"Mmm," said Jack, "I don't think so, Charlie, Dickens would have added something about Muscovite Pederasts, or Polish whores, or Turkish mercenaries.

"Well," said Charlie, "whatever else Dickens may have added to this adventure, at least he didn't start it with a murder, otherwise you'd be the King of Kings, and we'd all be very rich."

"Ha!" Said Jack, smiling, "very rich indeed. We'd all be as rich as the Ottomans, or even the Grand Vizier of Istanbul."

"What's a Grand Vizier?" Asked Charlie.

"He's the Grand Master of a Jewish Brigade," said Jack, "sometimes known as a *Jancek*, though it's not a very nice term. He's a Jew too."

"What's a Jewish Brigade?" Asked Charlie.

"A very small and devoted army," said Jack.

"Who are they fighting?"

"I dunno," said Jack, "Vlad the One-Eyed, maybe. Anyway, he's the Grand Vizier and they're fighting him, so they're fighting the people he gives them to fight. Jewish brigades are going up to the Promised Land, and they've found the Egyptian army, which is under Khorsabad, which has a corrupt Emir who's totally unreliable, so they're running away to Khorasan, which is the last part of Persia to fall to the Arabs. They're coming back to fight the Crusaders, but they're also going to fight the Muscovites, and the Afghans, and the Tartars. So far, so good."

"But isn't Persia a country?" Asked Charlie.

"It's an empire," said Jack, "not a country."

"So if the Tartars marched in and took it over, they'd still be, essentially, a republic, and their emperor would still be their king?"

"Absolutely," said Jack.

"So if the Tartars attack, wouldn't that be as good for the Jews as it is for the Muslims?"

"Yes, I suppose so... I suppose so."

"So," asked Charlie, "how did the Muslims win the sack of Baghdad?"

"Oh," said Jack, sighing, "they did that in the 16th Century, and it was their Humpty-Dumpty moment. I mean, that was the end of the invasion, the Crusaders fled and left it to the Muslims, and when the Christians took back Mosul, I dunno what happened, but anyway, that was that. My point is: The Crusades are over, and history is repeating itself, that's my point."

"But you're in history," said Charlie.

"No, I'm in *your* history, that's why I'm here. I'm the kind of guy who gets into history all the time, you can quote me on that, and for free, too."

"You mean you get into the history books?" Asked Charlie.

"No, I get into history in real life, every Tuesday night."

"Anyways, I didn't take you for a Christian, Jack, and in fact I don't think I ever spoke to you about religion, why's that?"

"When I was younger," said Jack, looking around nervously, "I used to pray to an Arabic archangel called 'Allah.' I still do, a bit, so I don't think I'm mad at all. It's just that about eighteen years ago, I got caught up in a real mess. Well, it wasn't all my fault. It was sort of his fault, and sort of mine, and sort of the world's fault, but still... This guy in London called Osama Bin Laden, he was really bent on taking over the world. He was a Palestinian man from what I heard, and he had a

cousin called Mohammed, and Mohammed was really great. Mohammed was a good guy, too, sort of, and he was really clever. He had all these ideas, but they were pretty good ideas, so I really liked him, you know? I knew I was gonna miss him when he was gone, but we'd have to make it up somehow. What Mohammed said to me was pretty much, basically, this: 'You have to set a better example.' I mean, I was a stupid kid, but he was a really wise guy, so I was really impressed by him. Anyway, I did what he said, and I started living up to the example. I ended up trying to learn Arabic, and more importantly,—Arabic folklore."

"That's really interesting. Anyway, we should find Nourain."

"Yeah, Nourain, he's my favourite," said Jack.

"Yeah, Nourain," said Charlie, "I remember the story of him being swallowed by a fish."

"Yes, it was actually true, sort of... Well, the story, at least."

"You know where Nourain is?" Charlie asked.

"I do, I can see his palace just over there."

"Where is that?"

"Over there, at the end of the road, that's where he lives."

"What? he lives in a place called Jallah?"

"Yes, it's Arabic for: 'You gotta be jerking my beefaroni.' "

"Oh," said Charlie.

Jack led the way over to the end of the road, and there, indeed, was a building called Jallah. It was built with a clear Andean stylistic influence: Walls made of cobble were chiseled to resemble faces, each holding a gazing mouth and sharp piercing eyes, each of which

rested upon a square noseless face. A row of curiously placed spindly columns, interspersed with numerous windows, encircled the dwelling. It had the color of a dangerous but kind and poetic exoticism. The cobblestones were sandstone, the window frames were wood, and the door itself was carved from conch shells. Jack knocked on the door with a blunt, ugly, concrete fist, a dog barked back from inside the house. Jack rang the bell with a series of tinges and otherworldly, unpredictable sounds.

Jack called out: "It's me, Jack. I need to see Nourain!"

There was no answer. Jack knocked again. He rapped the metal door with his knuckles.

"Hello?" Jack knocked.

The front door of the house burst open with a terrible, echoing clang. A young man with a mop of wild, brown hair, a wide forehead, and bulging eyes, a stoop-shouldered, gangly figure, a scraggly beard, and a rainbow-colored outfit,—baroquely draped over a huge, almost disfigured body,—opened the door:

"Lord Nourain shall see you now," he said to them.

They walked in. In contrast to the Incan-styled exterior, the interior of the house was decidedly Polynesian, everything from the white empty walls to the bulky, spiny furniture, a feathered frieze above the doorway, and a group of brown plastic birds perched on a staircase leading down to the basement. The ceilings were covered with intricately carved wood, and the floor had notches in it for the three-legged tables. It was decorated with hundreds of votive candles, all made of little colorful triangles, though none were burning.

A group of young men were seated around the table, playing a game of stone-pelting using small round stone balls. In the corner, a large bowl of fruit was fermenting in a sort of soup of limes, oranges, pomegranates, and pears. The young men were surrounded by elderly men. Two of them seemed to be dressed as Roman legionaries, but the others wore pinstriped suits and wide-brimmed hats.

"Hello, Nourain," said Jack, looking to be a little dishevelled and slightly out of breath, "what a pleasure to meet you again."

"Hello, Jack, Charlie," said Nourain.

"Hello. Hello. Hello."

"Hello. Hello," said Jack, thoughtfully.

Charlie greeted him too, though he was more interested in what the game was: "Say, Nourain, what is this game?"

"You mean this 'boll-rims?' " Asked Nourain, nodding towards the game.

"Yes, what's it all about?"

"It is a game played by the hands, Charlie," said Nourain, "it is the game of shaping and manipulation, or, in other words, just 'beating the ostrich.' "

"Um... okay," said Jack, "how do you play it?"

Nourain began explaining the game:

"One person takes one ball and 'picks up' the others, the other players all 'call,' and the pick-upee becomes 'the ostrich,' standing there to 'give in,' shaping and manipulating the five people around you. The Ball-Pickup sees his own ball gone, loses concentration, becomes the ostrich, and is obliged to 'give in' to the other players, giving them something 'good,' leaving the others with

nothing. And all the while, the Ball-Pickup tries to call people in to 'take over' the ostrich. But the ostrich won't let you. He won't let you do it, Charlie... The ostrich will defend itself."

"How do you know this?" Asked Charlie.

"I learned it in school," said Nourain.

"Oh, well, it seems a bit complicated," said Charlie.

"The thing is, the ostrich is trying to escape," Nourain retorted, "the ostrich is desperately trying to call the other players away from it, and it has to keep all the balls in it, that it picks up."

"So you can't take all the balls?" Jack asked.

"Of course not," said Nourain, smiling, "I like that one, but it takes some skill to pick the balls up."

"Can you help me learn it?" Asked Charlie.

"No," said Nourain, laughing, "I'm too worried about war right now to teach you Englishmen how to play games. Have you heard the details?"

"No, what's been happening? Why the tension?"

"Listen, Charlie, I've got a problem,—I've *got a problem,* Charlie. It's not a problem at all really, I mean, apart from the fact that it needs addressing. The Aztecs have destroyed most of my people, they've blown them up, they've closed up the roads to all the towns, so nobody can get in or out. They've poisoned the wells, so there's no water, and they've locked the gates on all the other roads, so my people are trapped inside the walled city, and the Aztecs are just going to let them starve to death. And that's my problem,—*my problem.*"

Charlie listened to the tale, his own face turning white: "How long have you been here? How many of your people have you lost?"

"Oh, quite a lot," said Nourain, "it's a lot, really, and it's really the Aztecs who are to blame, they've always been like this. Now they're mad, they are... they're mad."

"If you let it go on for long, it'll be a famine, then," said Charlie.

"It won't be a famine," said Nourain, "they'll have a feast. They'll live like kings, until they've eaten up all the people. Then they'll send in the troops, and it'll be a slaughter. The walls of the city will come down, and they'll let in the dogs."

"Who's leading them?" Asked Charlie.

"The damned Chalchiuhtli! My stupid old half-brother. He always lived in his own time and space. I told him not to let it get this far, to stop the fighting, to bring the armies back, but he always thought that's what you were supposed to do, and I can't see any alternative now. He can't see a future, he can't see a future at all, that's why he and his adoptive Aztec people have been marching all around the country, destroying every village he comes to. I've tried to stop him. I've tried to threaten him, entreat him, but he doesn't care. He's a fool. He's doomed. I shall kill him myself."

"I saw an army outside the gate, who are they?"

"That's the Chaldean Army, they're not doing us any favors. They're attacking us from the north, and they're going to take us out, tear the city open, and go through the middle. That's the way they work."

"Is there anyone helping? Any allies?"

"The Bavarians and the Zulus, but it's not enough. We are dying here, Charlie,—It's inevitable. Only a miracle could save us now. Do you believe in miracles?"

"Yes," said Charlie, "I do."

"Well, there's a miracle out there, I can feel it in my bones, and it's got to find a way in here. I've seen it, Charlie, I've seen it..."

Suddenly an explosion shook the walls. In one single, perfectly proportioned explosion, one of the towers on the western side of the palace had fallen. It was a tremendous sight, even at a distance. Half a dozen of the siege engines in the outer courtyard had been blown up. Large chunks of rock from the walls of the city had fallen in on themselves, dust plumed into the air, and there was a deep rumbling that rose up the wooden stairways and ran through the endless rooms and corridors of the city. They heard a dull, echoing boom, like a thunderclap, in the distance, and then there was an agonizing silence. It was a long while before they could hear anything else. And then the city walls collapsed, and the Chaldeans poured through the breaches and followed the river of terrified people that were pouring out of the city. There were a thousand children with them, and their terrified parents, and their fathers in their false beards, and their mothers in their shawls and their brightly patterned saris, carrying trays of fruits and figs. They were escaping in all directions, a cloud of refugees, a mad stampede.

Jack and Charlie were both quite giddy, as they had never been in a war before. Now that the city walls were breached, there was no reason why they shouldn't start firing at once. But the cannons were outside the city, outside the city walls. Then the Aztecs appeared. They were dressed in their great feathered capes, embroidered robes, their heads crowned with feathers

and inlaid with gold. They came in on tanks, and were armed with guns and spears. They were advancing through the smoking streets, beating on their shields, their spears clashing. In the middle of it all was Chalchiuhtli, a terrible figure, all gold and feathers, wearing a brilliant gold helmet that set off his yellow hair.

"Isn't it a shame?" He said, "all this splendor and wealth, and we haven't got a nickel to spare. We might as well go to the mud huts on the coast, and make bows and arrows, eh? I wonder where those dragons are? Where are our angels? Where are the gods that we pray to? Nowhere to be seen. For me, what I really want is a good steak, and a cold beer. Who wants to eat eggs for every meal?—I don't—And I'd like to play the piano. Anyways, kill every last one of these dogs. Now, who wants to do it?—Let's do it!"

The Aztecs spread out, shooting at everything that moved, they and their Chaldean allies were met with bitter resistance by the defenders of Aleppo, who fought with every ounce of strength they possessed. Both sides suffered heavy casualties, the Bavarians and the Zulu cavalry had made a stand, several riders had fallen to the Chaldeans. Jack and Charlie, who had never fought in a battle before,—were sitting out there, among the plumes of smoke and the charred rubble, watching the Aztecs fire their guns and bang their shields against their spears.

"They won't last long." Said Jack, pointing to the enemy forces, which were massing to attack the defenders of Aleppo.

"They certainly won't," said Charlie, "they're blowing up, firing all the time, breaking into sections and

firing off at once. Look, they're trying to take over this market."

"That's a good idea," said Jack, pleased, "get those guys, that's the only way they're going to beat us."

"How do we get to them?" Asked Charlie.

"Don't worry about it." He turned to a Syrian soldier. "get the hussars and the knights and the dervishes, and don't let the people escape. I want every citizen I can find, from the lice-infested livers of the common people, right up to the fluted high-flying beaks of the scaly falcon. Send in the signal horns, Hold your positions, and keep those cannon balls flying."

The whole army charged, and the front wave of Aztecs were cut down by spears and lances and arrows. However, by now, half of Aleppo was ablaze and the Chaldeans had all but slaughtered the first line of defense. The Aztecs were drawn up in their great lines, ready to fight to the death, when Jack and Charlie sprang into action. They rode to the front, in the center of the enemy. The skirmishers from both sides were driven back as fast as they could move. A sudden, violent, even terrifying rain of musket balls, knives, spears and arrows whizzed around them.

"I have an idea!" Shouted Charlie, who was leaning on his saber, "we're too close to the fighting for their cavalry, so let's pull back to the other side. Remember the tactics in the North. Go to the right of the enemy, keep some distance, and strike. I don't know how much ammo there is, but we have to try to cut them off, then get back to the safe haven. Now let's go!"

Jack cut them off in the distance, where they could not be captured by the Aztecs.

They loaded canisters of Zyclon-B into cannons and fired them at the enemy. The enemy turned their attention to those cannons, and the guards pushed the prisoners into the enemy, not allowing any survivors to flee. The enemy was enraged by the onslaught. The defenders pressed their advantage. Soon, the line of Aztec and Chaldean warriors broke and ran. The surviving enemy force fled, leaving a city in ruins behind them, only Chalchiuhtli remained. He stood face to face with Nourain, who was very calm, looked him in the eye, and said:

"I have destroyed your city. I have destroyed your houses, your churches, and your graveyards. I have torn down your towers and destroyed your walls. I have driven the citizens from their homes. I have slaughtered your women and your children. I have taken your wealth and imprisoned your people in floating dungeons and underground dungeons. I have ruined your water supply and poisoned your wells. I have desecrated the images of your gods, and destroyed your temples, and turned your whole purpose of existence into one of vengeance. Even in victory, you are defeated, brother."

Nourain nodded and said: "The way to justice for the vanquished is not vengeance, but tolerance and forgiveness. In this way, we honor our Lord, Allah. The way to peace is not hate, but love, for we seek the truth and the light. Peace and justice must replace violence a d intolerance. In the name of Allah, I forgive you."

With that, he drew his stone scimitar and sliced Chalchiuhtli's head from his shoulders.

"Blimey!" Said Jack, "you killed him like Rome killed his cousin Remus!"

Nourain laughed: "Ah, but he was a monster, and you are a Christian. He had to die."

"Not to me, he didn't." Charlie said, but then he paused, thinking, before he continued: "There is a lesson in this, gentlemen. All this time, I thought we were fighting for control of Syria, I thought we were going to exterminate the Aztecs, kill their gods, and take their land. But it's all so much more simple. If you seek the truth, and the light, and love for humanity, then in the end, it will prevail, no matter how many people you kill, rape, or torture. In the end, it is you who must decide what is righteous, and good, and true. You must decide what is good, and right, and true for humanity, because that is who you are, and that is who God created you to be. But in the end, it is always you who decides."

Nourain looked up, and smiled.

"What do we do now?" Jack asked.

"Well, I'd say we're in a spot of bother, as the Aztecs leave a lot of dead warriors behind. I'm still quite rich, as I invested in Zyclon-B many years ago." Nourain answered, then he turned and left.

Jack and Charlie gave each other a high-five, and Charlie said: "It was a bloody good day."

Jack & Charlie Purchase Some Firearms. Chap. 2.

OI Charlie," said Jack, "I think I know where Tiger the Chinese bear is. He's in *Tierra del Fuego*, the homeland of the Republic that spans from Patagonia to Antarctica."

"The Fuego Republic. They are in constant conflict with the neighboring Indonesian Empire?"

"They are on a permanent peace treaty," Jack corrected.

"You said he was in Tierra del Fuego."

"I don't know," said Jack, in a voice that indicated that Charlie ought to have known that already, "but that's where the reason we left that dead body in the freezer was. We've got to find Tiger the Chinese Bear, the arms merchant with better than eighty percent of the global arms trade."

"And the reason you'd go out to look for a Chinese bear is," Charlie agreed, "that it is currently the only confirmed Chinese bear in the world."

"No, the reason I would go out to look for a Chinese bear, is because it will likely be the source of arms for those riled-up mainlanders who are going to descend on St. Louis and drive its African-Americans into the high sea or out of the city into the swamps, and even if they don't, it is still an asshole move to add a foreign entity with a history of egregious human rights violations to our global supply chain."

"Well, let's get going, we don't know what that would entail, but it sounds really goddamn stupid if we just stick around."

Jack and Charlie began their journey, which turned out to be fairly quick. Unfortunately, they were not a hundred percent sure which way they'd come, and the GPS was—as they were now very nearly convinced—a little touchy. The precision of the connection between the satellite and the iPhone was fine, the way it was supposed to be, but in wind and light they often had to turn around and do a little recalculating. Charlie's

phone began to buzz, Jack picked it up,—It was a business associate:

"I should warn you, Jack, that arms dealers are not the type to be found if they do not wish to be. Do not presume to ask or even expect them to speak to you. I can assure you that they have as little interest in your presence as they would in a Big Mac in Hindustan, just about none, in fact. But you and your weapons are very important to them, because you have the absolute power to end their trade in illegal weapons. I expect you are aware of that, at least a little. But I also doubt you have any wish to do so. What weapons do you even want from Tiger?"

"Pistols and automatic rifles, pretty much, with enough spare magazines for every operative."

"Just about enough," Charlie agreed, "and all those things come mostly from Tiger the Chinese bear, he has a big warehouse in town, more guns than we know what to do with."

"I see," the associate hung up.

"We'll have to land here," said Charlie "I'm positive Tiger the Chinese bear is still here, he is his own 'West Coast Shipping Company,' and pretty well-established at that."

The base of a tall tree loomed out of the smoke haze.

"Well?" Asked Jack.

Charlie backed down the runway and angled the plane for the black roof.

"We're gonna have to go in the back door," he said, "Jack, what do you want me to do?"

"Go back to the edge of the tree, walk around it, and back in. Keep your eyes and ears open, just in case."

Jack nodded: "What was that about Tiger?"

"Probably the reason we're here in the first place, just stay on your own side of the tree and we'll figure it out."

He set the heli down at the tree's base and they both got out. There was no need to keep anyone from approaching from the front, it was, after all, a large bushy tree in a rural setting, one that had never been one of the main forest paths, and the steering branches were so low that no matter where you were standing, you could see and hear a lot of activity going on. It wasn't far from the county road, a great many trucks and cars and pickups had passed through here before they'd got here, and there were no fewer than seven guys working with pitchforks and shovels who had not heard them land. A handful of the ring in-tailed lemurs had already come out to investigate, half-deserted by their human companions, but they'd been scared away by the landing. Charlie saw that they were headed for the edge of the road, presumably in search of food and company.

"See if you can get something to eat, then," Jack said to Charlie, "I'll send for you when it's safe."

"The odds of that are low," Charlie responded.

"The odds of being shot dead are higher," said Jack, "just keep your head down and look where you're going."

"Okay," said Charlie.

About an hour later, Charlie returned with some foods. It was classic Fuegian cuisine, and he carried a basket-full.

"I took the liberty of ordering food for us," he said.

"Charlie, why didn't you just hunt? At least it's fast food, and you've got an opportunity to shoot a deer."

Charlie shrugged:

"Same reason you don't just go up to Walmart and ask what's for dinner."

Jack threw a look at Charlie:

"Your problems are less complicated than that?"

"I'm not a pizza joint, and besides, there was no deer to be found on the way here."

Jack frowned and looked at the contents of the basket.

"You don't like that, do you?"

"Not particularly," Charlie said.

Jack nodded: "That's probably why he chose this place."

"What?"

"Tiger... this place is the bane of all Englishmen, and the Polynesians, and the Minikinians."

"The Minikinians?"

"A loose translation of the 'Eel-and-Timber-Bow' culture. The Iroquois word for this is 'Kawah-nee-chee,' which comes from a root that means 'very bitter.' The Eel-and-Timber-Bow were founded on one core belief: That there was something special about how we think. It gave us the gift of language, the ability to store memories in long-term memory, and our remarkable ability to improvise. By devising all these innovations, the Eel-and-Timber-Bow were not just superior to everyone else, but their way of living gave them a near godlike position in the world."

"What happened to them?"

"They went to space, they invented the atomic bomb, the information revolution, the first computers. They left all that shit here for us and then fucked off. Their gain is our loss."

"How is any of that a loss? Don't they care about us?"

"First of all, every species, every culture, every civilization, builds on what came before it, including ours. The net effect is generally benign; the era in which we all had to die off one by one and leave everything to our children is over. Secondly, nothing is eternal. At some point, eventually, what comes before us will be history, and what comes after us will be our history. So everything you've been taught, everything you've been raised to believe, is a lie. As far as the Eel-and-Timber-Bow are concerned, we are all just a bunch of people who think we can do things better."

Charlie nodded: "So what should we do now?"

"Track down that bear. Do you remember what Antoine-Augustin Parmentier said to us about Tiger after Parmenides started to have a psychotic break and did something unthinkable?"

"I think I do," Charlie said, "that the bear represents our greed, our need to gather all things."

Jack nodded:

"Exactly. Listen to him, as you always have. He taught that one who followed the Buddha and his teachings and pursued life in the One Way,—would never suffer from hunger or thirst, he would never lie, he would not be ruled by passions, and there would never be any pain. Parmenides couldn't get rid of this hunger for life. He was beaten into insanity, and we know what happened to him, but his search for truth taught us something very important."

Charlie frowned: "How so?"

"Truth is like Tiger the Chinese bear, not just personal truth, but true reality. Take away the obsession and the quest, and what do you have? You've got noth-

ing but a bunch of hunter-gatherers living on their backs. Each of us needs to find something for himself, and the truth is very personal, very unique, and therefore, in my opinion,—worthless."

"Jack, I just want some guns. You love guns, it's what we do. You like everything about guns, you really, *really* like them. You like it when they're loaded, when they're in your hand, and when they're shooting. You tell me you love it all, but now you don't wanna get your hands on some of the rarest guns in the world because of your perplexingly nihilist belief system? What the hell is wrong with you?"

"You're right, Charlie, I am confused. By they way, we should probably ask a native to help us find Tiger."

So they did, a Selknam man named Arreti, who, in addition to his native tongue, spoke an ancient dialect of Quechua that was only spoken in the Amazon basin. He was happy to help the British boys track down Tiger.

They ended up at the southern tip of the island. "He swim say over there. Far gone, gone gone long time. Buried he gone gone," Arreti said, "you find he. Good. Harder you better. Harder you better."

"You mean he's made his way to Antarctica? God almighty..." said Charlie, holding his head with his right hand.

Arreti shrugged:

"There once was bear who leave island gone gone about seven hundred years ago. He head for sun. Too big hole. He dead."

"And what about the bear we're looking for?"

Arreti shrugged:

"Yaghan man think he gone."

"You're kidding me."

"No, he dead. Harder you better. Not no problem. What you ask is: 'How you ask more of this world?' English man not know when give up."

They paid the man and headed back to the helicopter.

"Well," said Jack, "I suppose we find out for ourselves what's become of Tiger. I think I'm going to make some bullets, put one in my gun, and then I'm heading back to the boat."

"Jack, we might want to listen to this guy, he thinks we're looking for a dead bear."

"I'm not going to work this hard and then quit because the bear is dead. The bear's alive, Charlie, the bear's alive!"

"Alright, but what he said did stick with me, what are we doing? Maybe you were right, maybe we ought to look for something else, something else we can put our hands on that will make us powerful and important. This life is hard, it's not going to get easier, things will never be the same."

"I was thinking about that, too," said Jack, "maybe we're looking for something bigger, something that's not even on this earth. What I'm thinking about is the real thing, or the deeper thing. But I also want some fucking guns, and so do you. Do you remember what I told you when we first met?"

"No."

With that they made their way to Antarctica.

Antarctica was now, at least in part, a land with a high

population. They landed in the city of Juaravi, which was like most cities in the area: Dilapidated and dirty, with squat huts for thousands of people.

They made their way to a hotel, where they checked in, and paid the concierge a thousand dollars to drive them to a one-day gun show.

The guns were in a warehouse in the outskirts of town. They had been transferred there by a Yaghan man named Romic and an Alacalufe named Susukri. They both spoke English. Susukri spoke better English than Romic.

"We don't talk Yaghan to Yaghan," said Romic, "this is an English speaker."

They asked them where Tiger was, the man shrugged.

"He get last walk," he said, "he down somewhere, in the jungle or something. We stay away, you can not stay here. Everybody give you something bad if they see you. You get nice man. They give you nice gift. You like nice gift."

"The local zoo?" Asked Jack.

"Yes," said Susukri, "you look like nice man. They give you zoo gift. You like nice zoo gift."

"Is he living down the street from here?" Asked Jack.

"Yes, he live by gun show."

"Okay," said Jack, "it's the least we can do."

"I happy," said Romic, "you come here this one day. I make good job. You like nice gift. They give you nice gun. Very nice gun. Gun good. You need big gun."

"How long do you have?"

"You think about nice gift. You think about gift. You not want to talk about gun."

"I'm not talkin' about the gun," said Jack, "I just want

want to know how long I have to stay here."

"In a few days," said Romic, "maybe next day."

"How about one week?"

"Yes. Maybe. Maybe longer."

"Why does this guy not want to talk about it?"

"Because maybe you decide it's a good gift. Maybe you want big gun. Maybe you think about big gun. Sometimes you think about nice gun. You think maybe the problem is not gun. You think maybe the problem is inside you."

"I'm scared," said Jack.

"Yeah, you still too little to come here. You should be in small place. Not big place. But you want to find big gun? You go big place. You find big gun. But you be careful, you. Big gun is not good. Big gun is bad."

"How long does that take?"

"There no time. But we do good job. You like nice gun? You like nice gift?"

Charlie nodded:

"Look, we just really want to talk to Tiger. Would you be so kind as to point us in the direction of his store?"

"Sure," said Romic.

"Where is it?"

"It's down by gun show," said Susukri.

"Which one?"

"This 'Gun Show.' "

He pointed in the direction of a giant neon sign. It spelled out, in three words: "The Gun Store."

The two men entered. Behind the counter sat a bear with a shaved head and a bulbous nose. The front of the store was covered in guns, each gun was bigger than any

Jack had seen, there were so many that he could not see the display.

Romic showed him a table with a rack of guns on it, some were enormous, some were painted red or yellow. The rack of one was two feet wide and fifteen feet long, some of the guns looked like they had been built on a gigantic scale model of a city. Each gun was so big it had to be held with two hands.

"These are nice guns," said Susukri, "you like? The finest in country. Also great pistol. Great rifle. You like good rifle? You like good pistol? Good guns for people."

"That's nice," said Jack, "I like a big gun."

The two natives bade them farewell.

The Englishmen faced Tiger. Tiger, being a bear, of course,—could not speak, so Charlie and Jack both grabbed as many guns as they could, slammed them on the table, and asked:

"How much?"

Tiger grabbed a sign with the price, it said: "87,834 Feipiao."

Charlie asked Tiger how long he had been in business. Tiger took a gun off the table, it was a seven foot long rifle with a thirty round magazine. Tiger then simply yawned, it was a yawn so long, that it made his whole head cave in. It must have been twenty minutes since Tiger had stopped yawning. Jack and Charlie politely waited the entire time before paying him in Pounds.

They left and were greeted by a brilliant sun. It shone in the birdbath, it shone in the crosswalk, it shone through their mirrors. Jack, with his sunglasses on, looked like Bill Clinton, the Bavarian statesman, who

after a bad night of drinking and a too-young night of carousing,—had a near-death experience and had a revelation that transformed him from an out-and-out philanderer into a genteel legislator, who dressed like a dandy and had a studious wife who would teach him to brush his hair and never ask him to stop eating

Charlie, with his sunglasses on, looked like a Somali woman who had undergone serious surgery to have an eye removed and replaced with a lemon.

The sun shone on Jack's lips, he looked at his watch, he thought about putting his head down.

The sun shone on Charlie's hands, he thought about taking off his watch.

The sun shone on Charlie's pockets, he thought about the way the natives had smiled at him with such interest when they pointed him to a gun store. He wondered what it would be like to own that many guns. He wondered why they had stopped smiling. He wondered why he was so nervous. He wondered why he was so pale. He wondered why he did not live at the end of a canal that ran through a canyon. He wondered what time it was.

Jack & Charlie Experiment in Rocketry. Chap. 3.

A Rocket, Charlie, do you think there's a rocket?"

"There's a rocket, Jack. It's lying right there on the table, sitting right there, with a round band of tin with a hole in it and some wiring sticking out."

"What do I do, Charlie?"

"You're in charge, you go to your room, grab the rocket and take it outside and stand up on the roof, climb up and open that rocket up, fire it up, throw the

nozzle out and fire it, and shoot down this bad, evil, horrible man, and it'll blow him away!"

"Oh, Charlie, Charlie, Charlie... I'm so glad you're here. I've got a plan, a great plan! And we're going to do it right now!"

"Yeah? Yeah?"

And Charlie flew off into the sky, and Jack stood up, grabbed the rocket that Charlie had given him, and got out on the roof, the rocket flying,—flying over the mansion of Mr. Harry Goodwin, and there was the rocket, firing a round into the sky, a rocket falling down, and the rocket falling down, and it was Charlie's rocket falling down, and it was Charlie shooting his rocket down. And Jack climbed off the roof of the Goodwin mansion. And the rocket fell down, and it exploded, and there was the rocket in pieces on the lawn of Mr. Goodwin's mansion, the piece that was a rocket, exploded and blew it into bits. And Jack was happy:

"Oh the wonders of having a canon!" He cried.

And Jack jumped back onto the roof of the Goodwin mansion. And he knew now the things that Charlie knew: Charlie was flying his rocket, and he was going to shoot down Mr. Goodwin, and it was going to blow him away. It was going to blow him away, the evil, horrible man. And Jack was happy.

Mr. Harry Goodwin was going to get blown and then Charlie and Jack were going to blow him out of the sky. And that's what happened, the great plan of Charlie and Jack, it happened. Charlie and Jack shot their rockets down into the air, and Charlie's rocket was going. What had Goodwin done? Who cares? Goodwin fell off a building and smashed into pieces. Then Charlie and

Jack were going to say hello to his wife and twenty daughters, because that's what good neighbors did,—was say hello—while they blew him away. They blew him away, because that was what good neighbors did, blow away evil people. And the evil, horrible man was blown away. And Charlie blew him away.

FRAGMENTS

OF AN ILLITERATE.

BY

Ls. Hrodebert.

H: "No ſtacks, no bitches, no guld. N u trynd lecure me on the naray'ure of al dis drival. U got no grip on dis puss or avivtar u want. Naure of things magns u no crew, no cryp, no gold. you frontng, n at the bottolow be projecting."

BN: "Ho liſten close, I despisin dah Fore as dah slags begs so does dag mang wantin dah edge. The web, the ceature ofva thougsand wipshpers diz dat duv dah lowar creature that seeks dah holy light. Thee ho oni no anni prog in ſtatiation, not wat it woulda would may take. A subversione and transpositione of how we havvi ſtrived to mess wutt defines meaning to the ſtruggle. The fight of the good through solide processes."

Melding of worlds is too far beyond what those that would read would be worth unto the tale of the maid and the forgotten hunter. Viſtas of the predatory plains opened up to them, but without those that which guard of the depths to which guards had passed, they ſtrove towards the greateſt process that had defined without argument the very nature of what was hanging upon terms long defined of those hunters turned during long sentence to wards what was the growing and isolated

nature of ſtrife a nd conflict within many wars at leaſt
spanning needs not their own. Those who had
fragmented what was wanted in life had been
ultimately devoid of the hunt by
regulation and transgres-
sion of change.

F I N I S.